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A RECORD OF THE LESSER FRIGATEBIRD *FREGATA ARIEL* FROM KENYA

During mid January 1980, my daughter Laria and I were at the Ocean Sports Hotel, near Watamu, Kenya (3.21S, 40.01E), outside one of the hotel's cottages on the rise behind the beach. We saw a frigatebird *Fregata* sp. flying northwards, inland of the line of casuarina trees which grow along the top of the beach. We had never seen a frigatebird in the wild before, but I know them well from films. The bird passed overhead at a height of about 40-50 feet (12-15m), and I obtained good views of the underside through binoculars.

Field identification of frigatebirds is difficult (see Harrison 1983), but this individual was readily recognizable as an adult male Lesser Frigatebird *Fregata ariel* by its unique ventral plumage pattern which was entirely black apart from a clearly visible oval white patch on each flank, which tapered to a point on the underwing. The flight was leisurely, with very slow, buoyant wing-beats. I immediately made a sketch of the bird's general shape and underside pattern, but did not record the exact date as I was unaware of the absence of earlier records of this species in Kenya. The time was about 16:15 - 16:30, and the date was between 12 and 15 January. The weather was clear, with a light breeze.

The race *F.a. iredalei* breeds on islands in the western Indian Ocean and disperses north to the coasts of India and Somalia (Harrison 1983, Ash & Miskell 1983), however, Ash (1985) has reappraised the Somalia records so that its status in that country now rests on a single old record of two birds in the NW. The only certain records of the species from the eastern seaboard of Africa south of Kenya are single reports in October (a skull) and May at Dar es Salaam, Tanzania (Britton 1980, East African Bird Report 1983, Harrison 1983). The present record is the first of the species from Kenya.

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NOTES ON BEHAVIOUR AND PLUMAGE DIMORPHISM IN LAGDEN'S
BUSH SHRIKE *MALACONOTUS LAGDENI*

Lagden's Bush Shrike *Malaconotus lagdeni* has rarely been recorded in East Africa (East Africa Natural History Society 1982). During September 1984 I observed this species on three occasions in the Bwindi Forest (formerly known as the Impenetrable Forest), southwestern Uganda. These observations may be of interest since virtually nothing seems to be known of the habits of this uncommon bird (Bannerman 1939, Chapin 1954, Mackworth-Praed & Grant 1970, Lippens & Wille 1976). An hitherto unknown plumage variant is also described and discussed.

The species was first observed at 2300 m on the northern perimeter of the Forest Reserve near Ruhizha Forest Station (1.02S, 29.46E), in patchy, disturbed forest on a steep hillside. The bird appeared a very large and thickset bush shrike with an extremely heavy black bill, immediately recognizable as *M. lagdeni* by its striking black, yellow-tipped inner secondaries and wing coverts. The face, crown, nape and upper mantle were dark grey, sharply demarcated from the dark green lower mantle. Below, the throat and upper breast were bright orange-yellow, merging into yellow on the belly and under-tail coverts; the flanks were pale green. The bird was perched on a stout horizontal branch, against which it was beating a large, uniformly green insect, probably a katydid (Orthoptera: Tettigonidae).

A second bush shrike alighted nearby a moment later. It was of identical size and shape to the first, but of quite different plumage. The upperparts resembled those of the first bird, except that the crown, face and upper mantle were brownish-grey, this colour merging into that of the lower mantle. The underparts, however, were almost entirely clear, uniform white; the only colour was a little pale yel-